

**Political History Collection
Interview H.0001.04 : Tape 4**

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and

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Name: Drakten [Tib. grags bstan]
Gender: Male
Age: 57
Date of Birth: 1935

Abstract

Drakten [Tib. grags bstan] was a monk official in the traditional Tibetan government who discusses in detail the political events that occurred in Lhasa in the 1950s. In this interview, he discusses the internal structure of Tibetan politics and its bureaucracy, as well as the revolt in Kham in the 1950s. He also discusses the start of the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region and how county administrative committees were set up. He talks about the rise of the People's Association, the offering of the golden throne to the Dalai Lama and about aspects of Chushigandru. Additionally, he discusses responses to the accusation that the Dalai Lama was inciting people to revolt and the role of Jenkentsisum in Kalimpong.

Tape 4

Q: From one perspective, though I may be wrong, if we consider the 1950s, the 17-Point Agreement was signed, and there was also nobody to help from the outside, right? So there seemed to be no alternative but to work within the terms of the 17-Point Agreement. So from 1950 to 1953, the Chinese were also showing their good side. Then things gradually got worse and worse, and of course in 1959, the Dalai Lama had to come to this side. So, Kungö, if you look at this whole period, how did things get worse and worse, and when? Some thought, I think, that maybe things would remain that way. Then later things didn't work out. When did things go bad and what was the reason?

A: Yes, yes. This is something that is my opinion and I can't say exactly why they decided to do this, and why they thought this and had this meeting, et cetera. . So that I cannot say.

Q: Yes, yes.

A: However, I have experienced and lived in that society and so, until 1954, from the upper to the lower and in the middle [Tib. stod smad bar gsum], the Chinese did not change their behavior. remained. Even those who worked at the head, they provided a very good salary and they taught people. For example, they would say, "You are a monk, and if you do some trading you will live better. If you want to do this, then we can help you." At that time, if they could find someone who put some faith in them, especially ranking people, then they would really help. If you did not approach them, then there was just the salary. If you approached them for something, then they would just spend lavishly with the hope of influencing your thinking. The Chinese were acting like this, even to the various dzongs they were saying this. However, the Chinese said that it was not a situation where a dog was given meat and it gulped it down. In such a situation, we Tibetans were very hard headed. In 1955, the Dalai Lama came up from China. The moment this was completed, from Amdo up to the time of the uprising, , the moment the Dalai Lama had completed the journey, the the militant policy [Tib. drag po'i lag len] began. Then in Amdo, it was a hopeless situation. Then in Baligyeesum, Baba, Litang, Gyeltang [Tib. rgyal thang] and Derge, in these areas it was extremely bad . Because of that, there was a strong revolt, and lamas, chiefs, pönbo, and many via the northern route, fled up to Lhasa. So in Lhasa, there were so many Amdo, Khamba, and Golok [Tib. mgo log] who opened shops with goods from China, like carpets and arms. Those who fled did so with arms right? And so in Lhasa it was just packed with new shops. In the lower regions they dropped bombs, destroyed monasteries, and caught all the lamas and pönbo. So this policy had started.

Q: I see, so it had started at that time.

A: Yes, towards the end of 1955 it started. In Amdo, and when things in Amdo were approaching emergency levels, revolts and what was happening in Tibet had already taken place in Amdo. And since this was heard in the Dome areas, then Baligyeesum

fought. When they did, all the monasteries were bombed from the air, guns were everywhere and cannons were fired. In some of the monasteries they told the monks to come to the monasteries since alms were going to be given. Then they locked them all up in the dukhang (assembly hall) and machine gunned them en masse. This had started after 1955. In the lower areas they used such militant force, and when they had actually experienced this in one's own country and among one's own people, since one could not bear this, some were able to escape to Lhasa. Then they all talked about this. When they did, and as I already told you yesterday, in the minds of the people there was never any hope that the Chinese were up to any good. In that mental state came all of this news. Therefore, the Tibetan outlook against the Chinese became stronger. The Chinese, since they were militantly ready to suppress, grew harsher on all aspects the more [Tibetans] jumped around. Then, up to now, the policy of the Chinese not even retaliating when a Tibetan hit them changed to the Chinese beating you with a stick when you just touched them. The whole question of arresting Tibetans, from this time, if one did some mischief, then they would be arrested. So in the Ü [Tib. dbus] area, there were a lot of arrests since the Chinese had displayed their power.

Then the people also got stronger. Then the work of the Kungö , after hearing about all of what was going on in the lower regions, increasingly grew. In 1956, from the lower regions there were many pönbo in Kalimpong who wanted to meet the Dalai Lama. So what I told you last time, Ngabö told Zhou Enlai that such things had happened. So many people had come to Kalimpong who wanted to tell of their plight, so these things must be investigated. The Dalai Lama's return had been confirmed, but these people had to have an audience. When Ngabö said that, Zhou Enlai could not make a reply and said that if that was the case, then do that by all means and report to Zhongyang. Until then, Zhongyang did not know.

Whether they knew about such things or not, from the start, without resorting to war and casualties, they gradually began tricking [Tib. mgo skor] the people. And when they filled the country, their only thoughts were to eat and that it was theirs. What should I say, I can't pinpoint a source, but what I heard was that Chairman Mao himself gave an order to their Tibet representative not to be rough. This was after all of this news, after the talk with Ngabö. So Mao said, "Don't be forceful at all, just spend whatever it costs. It doesn't matter since it's just like moving from this house to another. One can put from here to there or from there to here. Whatever it costs, just do it. But the borders must be well guarded." So when we government officials met and gathered, this was what we heard, saying this had arrived and that had arrived. So I have heard this a lot. Those who came to , they saw the strength of the Tibetans. They were all prepared, just ready to suppress, and what was sure to be eaten, the local Chinese workers thought of eating it right away and suppressing, and that was the local workers' shortcut. What Mao Zedong was saying was, "Let the older people die out, their customs will remain that way and die out also. Just spend a lot on money and leave them be. But don't let them out of the country. Then after some time it will automatically change. Their people will rise up and change. There is no need to forcefully suppress anyone." We heard a lot about this in Lhasa.

That is how things gradually deteriorated. Then the Chinese got more and more militant. What he (China) had was that, the internal matter, and the workers knew that the permanent plan and aim was to put Tibet under Chinese control. It was something that if they could do it they would. In that way, their actions got stronger and stronger. Then Vice Premier [Ch. fu zong li] Chen Yi arrived in Lhasa and opened the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region.

Q: What's his name?

A: Chen Yi. He gave a lecture and started the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region, and then they really started the County Administrative Committee or Dzong Dönjö Uyönlhengang [Tib. rdzong don gcod u yon lhan khang], and at the top of all the dzong, they had one County Administrative Committee. The dzong was the head, but from among the miser they selected representatives. So in each of the dzongs they started one.

Q: However, this was something under the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region.

A: Until then, only the Tibetan government [had power in the dzongs]. The Chinese had no connections as far as power in the dzong. All the taxes, laws, and orders were the government's and the Chinese had no say, right? After they started that, then, the County Administrative Committee selected from among the tsodrag, younger ones and coached them, and the dzong sort of had to consult them on whether something could be done or not. In this organization are all the Chinese policies. The heart of the matter was that now even the dzong was without any power. So even though there was the dzong, this organization was interfering in its power. This they were starting this in all the districts.

Q: In the districts, they were sort of becoming two things, right?

A: Yes, like that.

Q: What sort of problem was arising? There must have been something about, "Oh! Starting this is no good."

A: Regarding this, for example, I have not been to the dzong since I was a new official. For example, our neighbor Kungö Thubden.

Q: Who?

A: Our neighbor, Tsidrung Thubden Drothönlä [Tib. thub bstan 'gro don lags], he was [the head of] Kongpo Jomo [Tib. jo mo] Dzong. Then in the library is Kungö Chamba Yönden [Tib. byans pa yon tan]. At that time he was the Yangpajen Dzong [head]. Therefore, when they first started it, they were both at the dzong. And the way it started, its power structure and work, they both know in detail. So these people who worked know. Since we were not there but only heard what happened, it's not very proper for me to speak on this. If you ask them, if you ask one, then the way it worked would be the same for all.

For example, there was Tölung Tsede Shide [Tib. stod lung tshal bde] head. The monk official who was in charge was Trunyichemmo Bumtang's [Tib. 'bum thang] tsidrung, these days called Gyentsen something. Even these days in Tibet he is one of the most powerful people. Among the Tibetans, he is the biggest party member. He's called Gyentsen something. Today it is

said that in his room there are 5 telephones ringing and he's busy making replies. He is the one who has the complete authority to arrest and punish. He was Tölung Tsede Shide at that time. It seems like from before he was for change. And so Tölung Tsede Shide was the first experiment in land reformation and it was said that it would be a step-by-step approach from one dzong to another. So at Tsede Shide, they did an experiment. The dzongpön himself and a government official they came across someone who liked change, and so the first experiment in land reform was instituted in Tölung. Regarding this, Chamba Yöndenla knows clearly since he was the district official at Yangpajen nearby. When he went between Yangpajen and Lhasa, Tsede was a stop over.

Q: Yes I will ask him, but tell me a little of what you know.

A: At this place, first, what shall one say, a sample of their actions? What they did was put the representatives that they selected in the meeting hall and the room, and the real dzongpön moved into the kitchen. You know, he is the actual dzongpön. So he sat in the kitchen and the selected miser sat inside. Every day, whatever had to be said they did in a circle. Whatever they said, the official supported. Usually what the official said was, "One has to come together." Now, what happened at Tsede Dzong was that what they did was to select and put juniors and give them big salaries, and the official went along with what they said. So it seemed they did whatever they wanted. Regarding this, Chamba Yönden la knows clearly.

Q: If they started something like this, then one needed an order from above, right?

A: Yes, the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region had already been started.

Q: Yes, yes, and since the Dalai Lama's name was there as the head of the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region [question not finished].

A: Yes, his name was there, and most of the officials were also there and they were given some position/title.

Q: So there has to be a letter (order) saying to do this?

A: Yes, yes. There would be. So in this way, the way they took the first steps, the Chinese power got bigger and bigger. That's how it happened. And then when the People's Association rose up, seeing the situation, the People's Association could not bear it. They rose up and when they did, they were arrested, and then another one rose up. The later one was the one with Alo Chöndze and others, Lhabju [Tib. lhab phyug] Jola and Bumtang Trunyi. After they were arrested, the Chinese became so aware of the associations, and studied them and strongly opposed them, so they could not meet. So they found a method by offering a golden throne for the Dalai Lama. Then they said they were going to offer a golden throne. Usually in the Tsuglagang, in the Shingra [Tib. shing ra] Courtyard, during Mönlam, it's where the monks gather for prayers. On the other side is the Kyamra [Tib. 'khyam ra] Courtyard and on this side in the Shingra. In the Tsuglagang there are two large meeting courtyards. The southern one was called Shingra. In this, it was no place to make the throne, it was in the Tsuglagang. However, in order for the People's Association to be able to come together united, that it becomes conspicuous, they had it in the Tsuglagang. The workers sat in line and here some clerks listed the contributions, looked after the contributions and many other workers got together. During the day there were so many contributions. At first they said it was a golden throne, but they shaped it out of copper and later gold was given. That was the plan since one would need a lot of gold and there were no plans to collect that much. However, when they heard that a golden throne was being offered at the Tsuglagang, even poor villagers and people in Lhasa poured in their contribution, even if it was a woman's ring, and each felt that they had to leave something there. So much gold was given. The wealthier ones would just take their bangles out and offer them. At that time there were a lot of gold coins, quantities from 1 to 20 pieces. In this way, the private landowners and traders contributed a lot, and the people too, even if it was their only ring. Anyway, a great quantity of gold was given.

So they just hammered the gold on a wooden frame like a golden tomb, they really made a golden throne. And so much jewelry was also given. After a pure gold throne was made, there was so much gold left over that two huge butter lamps were made for the Jowo Rimpoche. The gold lamps that were there previously were plentiful, but the ones that were now offered were the largest.

The real reason was that they were not permitting the People's Association to meet. So they would say they were making accounts, making accounts at night et cetera, et cetera. The later meetings, they were making the throne outside, but inside the People's Association was meeting and that's how they discussed. Otherwise they were not permitted.

Q: I see. The offering of the throne was at the time of the People's Association or was it the Chushigandru?

A: No, it was not the Chushigandru. It was the People's Association itself.

Q: Now, the Chushigandru was another? When they started [question not finished].

A: It was just after the offering of the throne. In this offering a lot of the Chushigandru were also there. At this time it was not meeting as Chushigandru, just the People's Association. So in this, most of the people who wrote letters, made the lists, did the accounts, were the type of people who were the chandzö of the kudrags, like the Phala family's, Pekong [Tib. spel gong] Chandzö, and other famous chandzö, and also many Khamba traders who came voluntarily. At the place where they were making the throne, they said that they were making accounts for the throne and that's how they discussed and finally they made the pledge at Andru's house's chapel or chökang. Then, the main idea was that the Khambas, people from both the upper and lower regions [Tib. mdo stod smad], all the able bodied people, excluding the elderly, infirm, women and children, a pledge was made that they proclaimed that not one of them would stay. That, "If they do not come, then things will not be easy for them later on. Later if we lose, then that's it, you are free. If our work is successful, then if you do not join us today, then it will never be alright later." So there was not one Khamba who dared not join. The better off sold whatever they had, bought horses and had to leave. They all left.

The real reason for leaving was that Andru Dzasa was the main one who had good connections with government officials. Other

Khambas also naturally would have connections too. But the one who took responsibility and made the decision was Andru Dzasa. It is said that when his household took out their arms, he had 50 odd rifles. So under his leadership they went. When the Khambas left, the army, individual soldiers, also defected and joined the Chushigandru. There were some from the Trapchi Regiment and maybe from others. From the monasteries, many *dobdo* also went. The reason being that the Drichu Militant Camp was known as the Volunteer Army to Defend the Religion [Tib. *bstan srung dang blangs dag sgar*]. There was no talk of provinces [Tib. *mong chol kha*] and no other reasons. So the Volunteer Army to Defend the Religion and the Chinese, the enemies of the faith [Tib. *bstan dgra*], the Chinese invasion of Tibet was to destroy the Buddhist faith, and so they were to be the defenders of the faith. And the way they formed was on a volunteer basis and that's why they were called the Volunteer Army to Defend the Religion. In this were monks and younger Ütsang people, and people from well-off families. Then from those who went as a group were mainly Ganden monks. In the monasteries were the *tobtsang*, the *tobtsang* of *dobdo* monks, who just played around and wore their monk's skirts upside down. They also played trumpet and gyaling as part of their monastic obligation. Those who fetched water and served tea, this was their "young monk's tax/obligation" [Tib. *shöndre*]. Then if they needed to move something, they would call the *tobtsang* boys and they would carry things on their backs. They mainly practiced jumping and competed in intra *tratsang* jumping competitions. At Ganden, I think it was the medium *tobtsang*, the whole *tobtsang* went, all the boys. []

The whole *tobtsang* went and the head of the *tobtsang* was Ganden Changtse's [Tib. *byang rtse*] ex-Shengo, Phara Shesur [Tib. *pha ra zhal zur*]. His name is Ngawang Tharchin, one shesur. So the shesur and all the *tobtsang* boys, since the Chushigandru had many groups in places like Litang, Tsarongpa, Kongtserawa [Tib. *kong rtse ra ba*], Targye Gomba [Tib. *dar rgyas dgon pa*], Ganzi, Derge. For each group there was the regimental name based on the alphabet e.g., kadang, khadang, gadang, the 30 letters of the alphabet. So the Ganden *tobtsang* group was the hadang, "Hadang Ganden Magar," and there were many ragtag [Tib. *rdab be rdo be*] monks from Drepung and Sera. Then there was a household by the name of Chushul Kyendrong [Tib. *skyen grong*]. He was the leader of boys from Chushul, miser boys and local men. They formed a group. Then in Lhagyari there was Gyari Sechung [Tib. *rgya ri sras chung*], I think he is somewhere in Bhutan. Previously he was in the institute of performing arts. He led a number of people. Then there was Tsangpa Jola Bisu [Tib. *gtsang pa jo lags spel zur*]. You know this person called Bisu, I think they used to refer to him as Tsangpa Jola, a clerk at Shigatse. It seems Bisu Jola led a Tsangpa Regiment. This was called Shadang Tsangpa Magar. In Lhoka there was ours, I guess I shouldn't say ours, not only Chushigandru, but also people from Ü. So these days when Chushigandru does incense burning, for commemorating Drigutang, when the Kashag gives a speech, all three provinces or *chökasum* are included. Even though all were there, the main responsibility was held by Andru Dzasa. So when the government issued an order to Drigu, they addressed it to Andru Dzasa, Sandu Lo Nyendra [Tib. *sa 'du blo snyan grags*], and Jagö Namgyal Dorje [Tib. *bya rgod rnam rgyal rdo rje*].

The reason why it arose was for the Buddhist faith itself and because politics were falling apart. It was said that Jagö Namgyal Dorje said, "For the Chushigandru, funds have to be collected from the wealthier families who have the means [Tib. *yod 'don*] and we cannot impose a tax on the poor people." In Dakpo, in Kunam [Tib. *sku mam*] Dzong, it was said that 500 yaks were required, 500 *khe* of butter and so much a quantity of barley grains. I don't know whether it was 500 exactly, but as an example. The headmen all approached and said, "Yes we have to give, but we don't have that much. We can't empty everything, but it is important and for the battle fund we must serve." So they wanted a reduced amount. That's when Jagö Namgyal Dorje said, "What do you mean?! Tibet is like a tree trunk, you know! And the Chinese Communists, you know, are chopping the roots! You know that? We are fighting to stop them from cutting the tree. We are asking you to give us the fruits of the tree and you are amazed! It's one year's fruit! It will grow next year too! But if the root is cut, then there isn't any!" What he was saying is, "Just hand it over and don't talk too much, this is a matter of wartime. You have two options. One is give the things, otherwise, we will execute you."

Q: Chushigandru had their base at Drigu and when they were fighting, many said that in the Lhoka area they mistreated people and stole. Some say that there were false Khambas. Now, if one was going to fight, they needed horses, guns, food, et cetera. How did they procure their food supplies? Did the government secretly tell people to give to them or were the people not giving? If one is going to fight, one has to eat something, right? How did they do it?

A: It's as I have stated now. In various places, the *dzongpön* and the *tsodrag* were called. In each *dzong* they stated their necessities, barley, butter and yaks for meat. Wherever they were staying, to receive wood, yaks for slaughtering, fodder, people to work in the kitchen, to look after the horses, all of these servants were appointed "free" . Fodder was contributed by various households who had the means and provided [for] "free" [Tib. *nar gtong*]. Usually in Tibet, the fodder was peas and was put in the fodder bag, and for the good trotter horses, 3 handfuls of fodder were given. This was the amount in Lhasa for the exceptional horses. In the fodder bag, they were given one in the morning and another in the evening. This is the feed for the best breed of trotters. If this was not available, then only one was given in the morning. Less than that is two handfuls, then a handful. For the Chushigandru horses, they just spread out the fodder in the trough and the horses could eat as much as they wanted. The horses were just in great shape. So the procurements they said to collect from the miser and they had no choice but to give. The miser were also giving.

Q: Yes, they had to be thinking something, right?

A: Yes, mainly it's the name. The challengers to the Chinese Communists, protectors of the Buddhist faith. On one hand, the miser are miser, and when one arrives armed, then they have no choice. The food, of course, they need, but other than that, taking things, raping women, and bullying the nuns and these unpleasant things may have happened. It was well-known in Lhasa. Since it was in Lhoka, we don't know, but we heard of such doings. Now, Andru Jinda and the main group procured things in a proper way and did not resort to such bad doings. They also fought many times. Some did very well but some bad elements did not. Then it is said that the Chinese policy was to send false Khambas. Then they said that the Khambas were doing it. There were many false Khambas who were caught and beaten with switches. It is said that the Chinese sent them.

Q: Have you heard of false monks?

A: No, I have not.

Q: While shooting, there were some monks and it is said that the monks started returning fire. There were such talks.

A: That I have not heard. But false Khambas, they did send a lot.

Q: Were there some that were arrested?

A: Yes, there were arrests and some were even killed. It seems there were many. When we were making our escape, we came to Dakpo Wöga [Tib. 'ol dga']. There was a large family and we stopped there for a while and [answer not finished].

Q: Can you hold on for a minute? [].

A: At Norbulinga, for the people's volunteers, the government handed out a yellow cloth emblem to wear, on which there was a seal and a number. The way they gave it out, they did not just hand it to all present. They divided them into areas and in each courtyard a person was appointed as gyagpön, and the required number of emblems was handed to him and he distributed them. So at Norbulinga, this emblem of volunteers was given.

Q: Was it the Volunteer Army to Defend the Religion?

A: No, this was during the uprising at Norbulinga. While this was going on, the Amdowas came from that side from the Lhoka soldiers, and some Amdowas came and they were guarding the Ramagang ferry site. There were about 30 odd Amdowas. On the 10th at night the firing began, right? On the 11th evening there were Khambas and there must have been Böpa, I mean people from Ütsang, they were given Khamba dresses and they had the emblem that the government had given out. They carried the 303 English Carbines, and crossing to the other side, they took the Ramagang ferry site from the Amdowas. The Amdowas were on the higher ground and they said, "Now you guys go down to Nortölinga [Tib. nor stod gling ga], we have taken responsibility for this place. We have been sent from Norbulinga." So they were Khambas sent by the Chinese. Since they were wearing the emblem, and were approaching from the Norbulinga side and carrying 303 English Carbines, they just passed as volunteers and nobody noticed. Then in the evening, a lot of people went to that side, across the river and into the field with many pebbles, and it seemed the road was under the hillock. So many people were allowed to come towards the field. Their yellow emblem was visible, and wearing the fox fur hats and waving their hands. As soon as the people approached within distance, the bren-guns opened fire. At this place there were just so many people killed. The Chinese had sent them with Khamba dress. This is the clearest proof that the Chinese had sent false Khambas. They sent 70 some people. So the Chinese got hold of the Ramagang boat crossing and this was the place where Tibetans were escaping. Here, so many were lost, thinking that they were Tibetans.

Q: Later the People's Association, the government gave an order banning it. When was that?

A: After the golden throne was made and when the Chushigandru moved, then the People's Association did not stay. I think it was in 1957. In 57 they went to that side [Note: Chushigandru went to Drigutang in Maya-June 1958] and in 58 Chushigandru stayed there. And towards the beginning of 59, Lhasa was lost.

Q: What you were saying earlier, was that up to 1954, the way they talked remained?

A: Yes, the smooth way continued.

Q: Then, just as the Dalai Lama returned to Tibet in 1955, the revolt [question not finished].

A: It began right away. As soon as he arrived, it began, from Amdowa onwards. The militant policy began.

Q: What the Chinese were saying is that during this time, the bigger lamas went all over the place and incited the people to revolt. Karmapa and Sakya, and the two tutors, for example. How was it? Then, secondly, you know there was the secret group, the 6 or so that you mentioned and the Jenkhentsisum at Kalimpong. When the people were revolting what was their role in it? So the first question was regarding the lamas that the Chinese said were inciting the people.

A: I see. It's not that they started the revolt, but since the Dalai Lama had gone all the way to China, in the Amdo and Kham areas, all over, the people were hoping that they would have an audience and that he would stop by in their area and come this way and that way. There were just so many requests and they fervently hoped that during the lifetime of this Dalai Lama they would get to see him. Of course the Dalai Lama had to come one way and could not zigzag all over. Besides, he would not have the time. In some areas the Kagyü sect dominated, in others the Sakya, some others even had the Bon sect. So in the areas that were mostly Gelug, the Dalai Lama's tutor Trijang Rimpoche was sent. And in some areas, Karmapa was sent. They were sent very widespread to different areas. But the Dalai Lama was returning via one way. In the areas where the Dalai Lama could not go, various lamas were sent. It is not because they were sent to incite a revolt, but since the people had made the request/offered prayers to the government, the Dalai Lama sent his representatives. They requested prayers and the various lamas were sent to give teachings, and there was not even an inkling here about the government inciting people. Like I said yesterday, the government, the Kashag, took a single-minded approach towards the Chinese and did not deviate. Now Chemmo (Drönyerchemmo) and the others thought that that was all the government could do and if we didn't think in a different way, and if the government was just rubbed around in their [the Chinese] hands, then they had no clout [Tib. nus pa]. They just sacrificed everything and decided on their own and formed a group. So it's not because of this that the lamas were advised to incite revolt. Not at all. This was because, what should I say, the Chinese were going to eat the fruit before it was ripe. All of a sudden they resorted to using force [Tib. drag gcun] and that's why the Tibetan people rose up. Since there was no hope of things getting better, the fight began. From the government side there wasn't any form of instigation at all! The Kashag's relationship was absolutely straightforward, trying every means so that the relationship with the Chinese would not get torn. They did not at all follow a policy of fighting back strongly. And that's all they could do since they had no clout. Because of this, the work of Chemmo and others were examples of individual sacrifice. Each one on their own.

For example, yesterday I talked with you about how Gyentsenla and Tema Jokala took their own lives right? They were in that

group and they left behind that example. And for example, take Namseling. Yesterday I told how in the Chöjin Legung when the three monasteries had gathered, he suggested that the monasteries should take arms. He had absolutely no reservations about risking his life, right? Then he sent all of his children and his wife to Kalimpong. He himself went to Lhoka. The Khambas were revolting and the Chinese requested the Dalai Lama to suppress them. The Dalai Lama said we should decide this at a meeting. He said, "The policy we should follow is to try to mollify Zhongyang and quell the Khamba's disturbance. We do not have the capacity for these militant activities, so we must try and subside things." And so the meeting was assembled to discuss this. The meeting was unusual. The representatives were voted in from among the officials. For example, they considered how many were required from the Dzasa Teiji category, and from the Ta Lama. How many from the Khende Chechung [Tib. nang ma mkhan sde che chung] (Khenche and Khenjung), from the rimshi, and from the tsendrön? How many from the common category tsidrun and lay officials [Tib. dmangs dkyus], and from the drungtog, the title given mainly to craftsmen and also some clerks? They said about 80 odd people would do. So from each rank, they decided to have 5 people. That was the first time in Tibet a vote was cast. If a vote was not cast and it was not done properly, then there might have been included those whose thinking was close to the Chinese. So they did not want anybody who held Chinese ideology, or worked for the Chinese, or had Chinese connections when they voted. Anyway, this time the representatives were chosen by voting. For example, from each rank there were 5 people needed. If you take for example the common tsidrun category, there were 5. From those who had come out [to India], one was Kungö Gelek Targyela [Tib. dge legs dar rgyas lags], then others had not come. I was one. From 5 there were only 2 left.

The meeting took place in the Lekjö Legung Office. The main matter was that it was necessary to discuss how the Khamba revolt could be quelled. The Chinese said that the Kashag should order the Khambas to stop and if they listened, well and good. If not, then the local government must suppress them, and if the local government could not manage them, then Zhongyang would support the local government in this. That was the Chinese method. They were saying that Tibetans should shoot Tibetans and that was, from our perspective, unthinkable. Moreover, all were volunteering to defend the Buddhist faith, and at such a period they all were people who had risked losing their lives for this. So for us to implement what the Chinese said was not possible. So it was said that it was necessary to advise them and to continuously discuss this with them. That was the petition that was handed up.

Before this, they had already sent representatives from Drepung and Minkyiling [Tib. smon skyid gling pa]. But the Khambas did not listen at all. Later, after the meeting another had to be sent. In that Namseling and Trekhang Samjola [were sent]. Namseling had already sent his wife and children to Kalimpong, and having totally made up his mind after going to Lhoka, he stayed with the Khambas. He was sent by the orders of the Kashag, but when he got there he started consulting everything with Chemmo. And rather than the idea of discussing things with the Khambas, he sort of joined them. This was something he did on his own and he was earlier also in the group. He had decided that if he could go there, then he thought that he would do this work, so he went. When he got there, the two of them, Namseling and Samjola, recruited soldiers and called all the dzongpön for a meeting. In the local area there was a dzong and under them there were the clerks, ledrun, people who looked after leased animals [the shepön, Tib. she dpon], Shengo, Dingpön, Jimi [Tib. spyi mi], and the tsodrag. When there was an order given, it was addressed "to the dzong and tsodrag." The decision was made in consultation with them. All the tsodrag were brought together, about 1,500 of them were called by the two Khentsi [Khenjung and Tspön] to Lhüntse Dzong. Since the actual tsodrag were brought together, each one had a servant, or two or three, and since they were all from wealthy households, horses and arms were also sent. So about 1,500 tsodrag members arrived.

On top of that, they recruited soldiers and made a military list [Tib. dmag gzhang] of recruits. One of the people was the lay official Jokpe [Tib. lcog spe]. At that time he was the Lhüntse Dzongpön. And Gelong Lotenla [Tib. dge slong blo bstan lags] was the Tseja office's Chagnang. He was at Dakpo Lhapsö Dzong. The two of them were responsible for making the list. Since the real dzongpön and tsodrag were also present, they called soldiers from various areas, and when the military list was completed there were around 9,000 military recruits, and the officials and the tsodrag had to actually stay. So the military readiness was all prepared by the two. However, they did not expect that in Lhasa things would come to a head so soon. So for the time being, they had made all preparations so that when the command was given, they were just ready to join forces. So for the time being, it was decided that all the recruits should return and then come whenever they were called upon. They were mainly trying to get in touch with others in India and bring a lot of arms. So Namseling just totally risked himself for the government and did the work. However, according to the government policy, his actions were not in accordance with it and were just the opposite, as he worked to help the Khambas. But no relations were made with the government. Relations were totally cut off with the Kashag, and they consulted only Chemmo and made the decisions. This was told to me by Trekhang Samjola when I interviewed him here. He said it in front of everyone. That's it, isn't it. Regarding the military list, the one who wrote the letter was Gelong Chime Gombola [Tib. 'chi med mgon po]. He is still here, right? That's how they did it. How the sacrifice was made. Really, from his positional point of view, Namseling was a tsipön and all that was left to do was to become a shape. But he gave all of that up and voluntarily stayed with the militants.

Likewise, when in Norbulinga the people had already overflowed, and Drönyerchemmo had said to the tsendrön, "Okay, now come on, all of you come. Now, whether we stay quiet or not, we are already branded as reactionaries [Tib. log spyod pa]. They have already given us that name and are announcing it. If we keep quiet we are reactionaries, and if we fight we are still reactionaries. So come on, all of you come and work." He said that at the gag (Secretariat). Now, there was the tsondu hragdu at Shöl Pargang.

So one day all the representatives were called to the Dalai Lama's room. The meeting at Norbulinga was on the 11th and the 12th. On the 13th or 14th, the meeting was moved to Shöl. So it was on the 14th or 15th when the Dalai Lama called the representatives down. The Dalai Lama made a proclamation [Tib. bka' khyab]. Our uncle at Norbulinga was there as a representative. He was among those selected. So the Dalai Lama said, "There is so much commotion from the crowd and the Chinese are firing a lot. On my rooftop the whistling of bullets is endless. And I'm not happy about this, so discuss the situation well so as not to continue this disorder. Try and subside the anger of the Chinese, like approaching the fire even if it burns you [Tib. mes 'tshigs mer gtugs]. So at the meeting, discuss how to cool things off and think about how to discuss things with the Chinese." So the meeting was discussing whether we were going to talk with the Chinese or fight them. The mood was towards contacting [Tib. sne spro] the Chinese and this was to happen the next day. The idea was to do it soon because once the trigger was pulled there was nothing

to talk about. The mood of the meeting was swinging in favor of discussion with the Chinese. At this junction, Chemmo said, "If the meeting representatives would contact the Chinese and have discussions, then I'm leaving straight for Lhoka and I am not going to stay here and serve." This is what he was thinking. Like Namseling, he was thinking of going to Lhoka and fighting. From the Chinese side, they were already branded as reactionaries. They were already accepting this. So if something was worked out with the Chinese, then, like the two sitsab, gradually it was something to be left out. Anyway, Chemmo risked all saying that if the situation arose where there would be discussions with the Chinese then he was leaving for Lhoka. That is the way such sacrifices were made.

At Norbulinga there were two days of meetings. On the first day there were long talks. Dzasa Minkyiling was a long-winded talker [Tib. gsung kha rgyas po] and used to talk in an old style [Tib. snga nyams dod po]. When he had finished talking, then, Tsarong Kungö said, "Now! It's not like that. I'll tell you, it's not like that, not like that! Now, if we talk like that, it's too long. We don't have time. The Chinese are going to proceed after they are completely ready. There's nothing left but for them to pull the trigger. They will give an order 'Pull the trigger' and then 'do do do do do' they will shoot from all four quarters. Other than that, they have everything ready. They have their hands on the trigger and the moment they give the order there will be nothing but bullets. We just gather here and give these long speeches, speeches that have no road. There's no time! Now there are only two things to talk about! Are you going to talk with the Chinese and work things out, or have the people risen and said that the Chinese policy is no good? Since you have opposed them, are you going to continue to oppose them or not?! So you decide. There's nothing but these two things. Let us see a show of hands! If you're for working things out, then hold on to that policy and talk and come to an agreement. If you are going to fight, then decide, make preparations. Just making long speeches will not help. Besides, the way we are conducting this meeting is not correct. We wear yellow robes and face downwards with another lower section facing upwards, and when they talk they have to get up and take off their hats and pay respect [Tib. phyag 'bul zhus]. Now that period is gone, it's not here anymore! Now those who are seated above, come down, circle around. The one's in the back, the people's representatives, come up." He took one look. The trungtso stayed on the right side. The official were on this side. On one side were the drungtog, and the people's representatives and the monasteries. The trungtso were in the front. He said, "No, that's not the way, the people's representatives should not be all the way down there. The officials at the back of the trungtso, move aside, move aside!" He just gave the command. Then said, "You the people's representatives, come up here! Come behind the trungtso. Now the People's Association must rise up and talk and not stay like that!" There were about 30 odd representatives, he got them up and put them up behind the trungtso. He continued, "Now we have to talk in a circle. Today the representatives have been voted on and everyone has equal rights. Now decide, keeping the two options in mind. If we decide to fight, then the first thing we must do is get salaries and get the military provisions [Tib. dmag rgyags] ready. Just now we are just sitting around like this and people just came helter skelter [Tib. ha be ho be], and Norbulinga is full of people. Both inside and outside it is full of our people right? All just came riding horses without bringing anything [Tib. hrang hrang hrang]. Is there anyone of you who has even brought a bag of tsamba? Ugh? No not one! If we all just sit around and make long speeches and when the Chinese pull the trigger, there's not even anything to eat for this many people. War is not an easy thing! If the trigger is pulled you can't go there nor come here. No matter how long it takes you will have to stay in here. So if you have no war provisions then what are you going to do? Immediately roast your grains and turn them into tsamba! Do it right now! Right now! We must do it urgently [Tib. dza drag]. So decide on the two options. If you want to talk with the Chinese we don't need readiness. If you want to fight, then get the war funds ready. Decide!" That's what Tsarong said.

He said, "I was in India and my wife died. So I asked the Chinese to allow me to go for offerings to India and the Chinese did not allow me to go. Our types, they would not allow us to go to India. They did not allow me to go, you know! So I sought an audience with the Dalai Lama and made a request saying that, 'My wife died and I would like to request you to seek permission for me to go make offerings in India.' The Dalai Lama said, 'It'll be alright.' Then he asked me when I was returning. It was also time for the Dalai Lama's geshe exam [Tib. grwa skor mdzad chen] and in the spur of the moment I said that I would return before that. Actually, if one has children or money, it is a period when these should be left in India. So I who was there would not come back, right? However, since the Dalai Lama asked me when I was coming I just said it in the spur of the moment. Some say that Tsarong has no religion, that Tsarong House does not even have a picture, but the house is only whitewashed. They say that. I don't live conspicuously in my room. What's the use of 'sinning and doing elaborate rituals [Tib. 'jig rten chos brgyad]. I smoke and do all kinds of things. I sleep and smoke. So it's no good, right? They say that Tsarong has no religion. It's not that I'm without religion, I have a separate prayer room, with permanently lit butter lamps [Tib. rgyun bkang]. For the monthly and regular prayers, I have a caretaker separately appointed. In order to repay the gratitude of the 13th Dalai lama, I have even invited the Dalai Lama to the Mönlam Assembly [Tib. spyen 'dren]. Even for the Mönlam I have left some funds [Tib. gtong rtsa] and from the interest I am able to give 10 trangga each year. It is said that I, Tsarong, have no religion. It's not that I don't have religion. However, I don't say prayers and try to look proper. I don't say prayers at all. If we decide to fight, then the Dalai Lama must think about going to India. As for myself, if I was told to go, I also have given children to Bhutan. So I have connections there. Even at Kalimpong I have a house and an account. So if I was told to go there, and if suddenly the Dalai Lama were to go there, then I could be of some help there. But if Tsarong was told to stay here and get involved, I am a man who is passed sixty, and even if I were to die today, it is a short life, and if I die tomorrow it's a long life. I have no fear of dying. If I was told to stay, I will and will do whatever I was told to do. If I was told to go, then I would go too and I could be of some use." That's what Tsarong said.

Then, there was a clerk called Jola Kūsangla [Tib. jo lags kun bzang]. He was known as Kashag Edrung Kūsangla. All the drungtog discussed what Tsarong had said about the choice of the two policies. They seemed to have discussed among themselves and then Kūsangla got up and said, "We, rupön, gyapön and the clerks have all discussed and we have one solid word to say. On the question of discussions with the Chinese, we will on no account accept this. First, please think about trying to take the Dalai Lama to some European country. Then we will call forth the 18-60 [those above 18 years of age and below 60 years of age], and form a mighty military force. And we will fight until all the men are dead and only the women are left [Tib. pho zad mo thug], and until the hands are lost up to the shoulders [Tib. lag zad dpung thug]. And rather than stay with him [Chineses], until our needs are satiated, we want nothing to do but to fight. So from the two policy that have been pointed out, we the drungtog have discussed and united in mind. So whatever it is, please decide that there is no benefit in talking with the Chinese." To that, there was thunderous applause.

So the mood was pretty much swinging in this way. It was now coming to the point where they were going to get ready for making military provisions. So Tsomönling Kungö Trunyichemmo, who is Tsomönling Chandzö, he is called Kungö Lheding [Tib. lha lding], said, "Now Tsarong has spoken like that and the drungtog have also made this request. If we are going to talk to the Chinese, then all of this is unnecessary, right? If, we are going to get the military provisions ready, if you are going to think along those lines, then what I want to say is that Tsomönling Labrang has many estates. We also have many nomads. Even in Lhasa we have a lot of grain and in Norbulinga too. So I want to say that if you are going to get the military provisions ready, then Tsomönling Labrang, from whatever estate, no matter how you want to collect the grain, and no matter how you are going to use it, today, for this purpose, I want to say, please put it to use in whatever manner you want. We even have nomads in the northern plains, and even these please use them however you like. It is thanks to the Tibetan government from the earliest times that Tsomönling Labrang has such wealth."